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INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0981

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000414

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2020  
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: UNAMI ON DE-BA'ATHIFICATION ISSUE

Classified By: Political Counselor Yuri Kim for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

1. (C) Previewing SRSG Melkert's February 16 report to the UNSC, Deputy SRSG said Melkert would likely express concern about the lack of transparency in the de-Ba'athification campaign but caution against making a determination at this time on the legitimacy and credibility of Iraq's electoral process. D/SRSG said UNAMI and the USG should increase pressure on all parties to improve transparency and ensure rule of law, but that UNAMI considered it premature to exert pressure publicly. D/SRSG said UNAMI would appeal to the wisdom of Iraq's political leadership to find consensus that will enable the election to move forward on time and in a transparent manner. End Summary.

UNAMI Will Press in Private, Not Public

2. (C) UNAMI Deputy SRSG for Political Affairs Jerzy Skuratowicz told PolCouns February 14 that SRSG Ad Melkert would likely express to the UNSC on February 16 concern over some aspects of the electoral process that showed lack of transparency, such as the recent de-Ba'athification campaign, but would likely avoid a statement at this point that judged the legitimacy and credibility of Iraq's electoral process. Melkert would likely say "it was not yet the time to judge" the process in Iraq, and he would encourage patience in the last three weeks before Iraq's parliamentary election on March 7.

3. (C) Skuratowicz agreed with PolCouns on the need to continue to increase pressure on all parties strongly to ensure more transparency in the political process and discourage actions that could erode perceptions of the credibility and legitimacy of the vote on March 7. He said UNAMI would appeal to the wisdom of Iraq's political leadership to find consensus that would enable the election to move forward on time and in a transparent manner.

Predicting Mutlaq's Next Move

4. (C) Skuratowicz said UNAMI did not plan to make any public statements on the disqualification of Salih al-Mutlaq or de-Ba'athification at this time. UNAMI would, however, continue engaging key leaders in private to reinforce the importance of rule of law, inclusiveness, and transparency throughout Iraq's election period. By supporting the process, and perhaps encouraging Mutlaq to consider an appeal to the Federal Supreme Court, it would be possible to keep elections on track without making Mutlaq feel abandoned.

5. (C) UNAMI Political Affairs Officer Marwan Ali cautioned that it was too soon to say how Mutlaq might react to exclusion from the March election. PolCouns agreed that

Iraqiyya coalition leaders and others feared that Mutlaq, if he felt abandoned, might turn against his coalition partners and discredit them ahead of March 7. Ali added that various contacts, including Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, had expressed concerns that de-Ba'athification was not yet over, and that additional efforts to discredit senior politicians as "Ba'athists" might continue even after March 7. Ali cautioned that the Accountability and Justice Commission was an institution that could "come back to life at any time." Noting that the lack of transparency during the de-Ba'athification of candidates was feeding an environment of fear, PolCouns stressed that the Embassy and UNAMI must redouble efforts to ensure the rule of law and the future credibility and legitimacy of the election as we move toward March 7.

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